

Don Horsley Park at Tunitas Creek Beach

20775 Cabrillo Highway South, Half Moon Bay, CA
Park HQ (San Pedro Valley Park) 650-355-8289
Police, Fire, or Medical Emergency 911

San Mateo County Parks

Reservations 650-363-4021
General information 650-363-4020
www.SMCoParks.org

The Department manages parks, trails, and historic sites to preserve public lands and provide opportunities for education and recreation. The system's properties, located throughout the County, encompass more than 16,000 acres.

The parks represent our region's wondrously diverse natural settings, from rugged tidepools, lush mountain forests, and remote campsites to Bayfront shoreline, sunny picnic areas, and popular playgrounds.

The Department sells annual passes, offering unlimited entrances to all County Parks for a year.

Support your parks

You can volunteer to help rangers protect and improve parklands and serve park visitors.

The San Mateo County Parks Foundation raises funds to improve the quality of County Parks for our community. For information, visit www.SupportParks.org.

San Mateo County Parks
Wild places & friendly spaces

Don Horsley Park at Tunitas Creek Beach

San Mateo County Parks



Wild places & friendly spaces

Don Horsley Park at Tunitas Creek Beach

This stunning 58-acre park is located at the mouth of Tunitas Creek, halfway between the towns of Half Moon Bay and Pescadero.

Tunitas Creek Beach and its rugged bluffs are a sanctuary for shorebirds and a picturesque place for wildlife observation, hiking, and beach exploration.



Rob Cala

Activities and facilities

The accessible Mid-Bluff Trail leads from the parking lot at the upper bluff to the mid-bluff overlook, which features benches, picnic tables, amphitheater, and restroom.

Two trails lead from the upper bluff to the beach. The mile-long beach is ideal for beach and water play, but there are **no lifeguards on duty**.

Always use caution when in or near the ocean. Never turn your back to the ocean – even when in shallow water.

Audio guides for this park

To listen to our rangers' audio guides about this park's history and natural resources, download the free TravelStorys app.



cc2.0 Becky Matsubara

History and natural features

Layers of sandstone began forming at the bottom of the ocean more than five million years ago. Earthquake activity along the legendary San Andreas Fault and lesser known San Gregorio Fault moved these layers up to the bluffs far above the beach.

This was a village site for the Ohlone people, who lived in connection with and responsibility for the land for millennia. By the late 1800s and early 1900s, this section of the coast had become a thoroughfare for moving goods by rail and sea; local landowner Alexander Gordon built a giant wooden chute to send sacks of grain from the blufftop to ships waiting below.

More recently, illegal gatherings at the beach impacted the creek and beach, and community members called for the area to be protected. With leadership from former San Mateo County Supervisor Don Horsley, the County and Peninsula Open Space Trust collaborated to purchase the site and create this beach park with community input.

Wildlife thrives in the park's habitats. Just offshore, coastal upwellings provide food for humpback and gray whales and other marine life. Several threatened and endangered species live in the Tunitas Creek riparian corridor, including steelhead trout, coho salmon, California red-legged frogs, and San Francisco garter snakes. The wide expanse of sandy beach is often filled with shorebirds, including the threatened western snowy plover; parts of the beach are fenced to protect their nesting habitat.

Park hours and use

- Hours** The Park opens at 8am. Closing time changes seasonally, and is posted.
- Dogs / Pets** No dogs or other pets are allowed.
- Horses** No horses are allowed.
- Prohibited** No alcohol. No fires or portable barbeques. No camping.
- Smoking** No smoking in County Parks, on trails, or at historical sites.

Please protect the Park's natural environment and do not disturb or remove any plants or animals.

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LEGEND

- Accessible trail (wheelchair/hiking)
- Hiking/bicycle trail
- Hiking trail
- Stairway
- Trail distance (miles)
- Numbered trail junctions
- Parking
- Restroom
- Picnic area
- Bench
- Beach access
- Beach
- Amphitheater
- Overlook
- County park
- Other public lands
- Private property
- Ranger office
- Bike rack
- California Coastal Trail



0 0.1 0.2 mile

0 100 200 300 meters

Contour interval 40 feet



Trails

The accessible Mid-Bluff trail is appropriate for walkers, strollers, and wheelchair users.

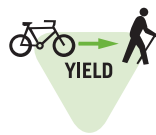
Mid-Bluff Trail (parking lot to overlook) .5 mile

John Pitcher Trail (Mid-Bluff to beach) .1 mile

Schilling Trail (parking lot to beach) .6 mile

- Hikers, runners, and bicyclists share these trails. Please be alert and courteous to all trail users.
- Bicyclists always yield to other trail users.
- Weather conditions may cause seasonal trail closures.

For current trail advisories and closures, visit www.SMCoParks.org.



Rob Cala